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Life
of
President
Benito Pablo Juarez
The Savior and Regenerator
of
Mexico

By a Member of
Gen. Escobedo's Staff

COL. JOHN SOBIESKI



President Lincoln's Application
of
The Monroe Doctrine

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Benito Pablo Juarez
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Dedicated to The Princess of Count John Sobieski
and mother of Col. John Sobieski

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Introduction
by
S. A. Coffman



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S. A. Coffman



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19-7645



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APR 29 1919

INTRODUCTION

Why I like to visit with Count John Sobieski and why he is qualified to relate the story of Pres. Juarez of Mexico.

Because he descends from Poland's greatest king, King John (Sobieski) III of Poland.

Because he tells me the thrilling story how the Cossack soldiers came to the Sobieski castle east of Warsaw and took him and his mother to Warsaw, to appear before the Viceroy of Poland, after his father had been wounded, captured, imprisoned and sentenced to be executed by the Czar of Russia.

Because he tells me the story of the confiscation of the Sobieski estate, consisting of 200,000 acres of land, the castle, jewels, gold teasetts, the latter now reported to be held at Tours, France, is filled with romance that traces throughout the court chambers of Europe.

Because he tells me the story of the execution of all his kin, how he and his mother, a princess, were banished under the penalty of death by order of the Czar of Russia, should they or any of their kin ever set foot on Russian soil.

Because he tells me the story of how he and his mother were conducted from Warsaw by the Cossacks, their liberation across the border in Galicia, their ejection from Austria and Posen, their subsequent arrests by detectives of the Czar, their trip to Brussels, their stay at Berne, their banishment from Milan, Italy, by Archduke Maximilian of Austria who was now Viceroy of Italy and who later became Emperor of Mexico and after his fall in Mexico was led to execution by Sobieski.

Because he tells me the story of Maximilian's appearance when he addressed them at Milan, and his remarks in his prison cell in Mexico after his fall as emperor, when visited by him (Count Sobieski) sixteen years later as Escobedo's chief of staff, is doubly thrilling.

Because he tells me the story of his life in Liverpool, England, before and after the death of his mother and how a sailor boy concealed him in the bottom of Captain Craven's vessel bound for New York City.

Because he tells me the story of his uncle, General Joseph Bem, who was one of Napoleon's greatest generals and the story of how his uncle reorganized the Turkish army and was raised to the rank of pasha. The ovation that England gave Louis Kossuth, the great champion of liberty, on his return from Turkey, with his uncle, General Joseph Bem.

Because he tells me the story of the visits made by the sailor boy who persuaded him to run away to America, and how he was concealed in the bottom of a vessel by the sailor boy; how he became a bugler at the U. S. Army post near Governors' Island, New York City.

Because he tells me the story of his trip in the U. S. Army to Leavenworth, Kansas; Salt Lake City, Utah; Fort Union, New Mexico; then back to Washington, D. C., at the outbreak of the Civil War, the battles through which he passed; his wound at Gettysburg, the ball passing entirely through the body.

The story of how President Lincoln and General Baker sent him to Richmond as a spy to interview Jefferson Davis and Lee; his report to General Grant that Richmond could not be taken by storm or strategy.

Because he tells me the story of his acting as chief of staff for General Escobedo in Mexico, three times sentenced to be shot; the 1,000 mile ride by the beautiful daughter of Escobedo to save his life; visiting 3 days with Maximilian in his cell and reminding him of the day when he banished him (Sobieski) from Italy; his attempt to capture Carlotta, wife of Emperor Maximilian; how her French guards all fell dead from their horses when the soldiers fired; how Lopez grasped the bridle of her horse; how the Empress shot him and escaped; how Sobieski directed the execution of Maximilian as commander of the reserve firing squad.

All of this enables Colonel John Sobieski to tell the story of President Juarez of Mexico with whom he fought through this long struggle and for which he was voted, if I recall correctly, 10,000 acres of land in Mexico.

S. A. COFFMAN,
Rosendale, Mo.

President Benito Pablo Juarez

The Saviour and Regenerator of Mexico.

By a Member of Gen. Escobedo's Staff, Col. John Sobieski.

By a most remarkable coincidence the two men who were the most widely known and the most talked about during the period extending from 1860 until 1865 were the President of the Republic of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, and the President of the Republic of Mexico, Benito Pablo (Benjamin Paul) Juarez. These two Presidents were born in similar environments. Abraham Lincoln was born in a one-room log cabin in the wilds of Kentucky and fifty years afterwards was chosen President of the United States, carried his country through a mighty civil conflict and died at the very hour of its consummation amid the lamentations of the whole world, leaving an imperishable name; a name that will live when all kings and emperors have been forgotten.

President Juarez was born a few years earlier than Lincoln, in San Pablo, a little village in the State of Oajaca, March 21, 1806, of Indian parents, in a little adobe cabin of one room. There was not in his veins a single drop of the blood of Mexico's conquerors. Like that of the babe born in Kentucky that was destined to a great career, so was born this Indian boy, amid unpromising surroundings. When he was but a small child he lost both of his parents. When he was twelve years old he was still unable to speak anything but the Indian language, a language not recognized by the laws of Spain. Up to this time he had never seen a book nor had learned a single letter. But at this age, a monk took him into his service to perform menial work. The kind monk recognized in this bright obedient boy elements of character that attracted him, and he instructed him in the rudiments of education. The boy studied the books with such ardor and enthusiasm that the monk determined to give him still greater opportunities, and placed him in a seminary in the village, intending to make a priest of him. He soon stood at the head of all his classes in the seminary. He finally determined that he would not enter the priesthood, but decided instead to enter the law. He attended college for that purpose in the same

village. He astonished all by his application to the study of law. The students of the school were amazed to see the little despised charity scholar taking all the honors and graduating at the head of his class.

In 1834 he was admitted to the bar. From the very first he took an active interest in the affairs of his country. Mexico was in a most deplorable condition, torn asunder by factions, and almost in a continual state of civil war. He identified himself with the liberal or progressive party, and in 1836 suffered his first imprisonment at the hands of the conservative party. After an imprisonment of several months he was liberated and resumed the practice of law. But in 1842, at the age of thirty-six, he became the Chief Judge of the Republic of Mexico and discharged the duties of that exalted office with great ability and integrity, and easily placed himself at the head of the jurists of his country. He held this post until 1845, when he became Secretary of State, of the State of Oajaca. He soon afterwards, however, relinquished that office, and acted as Chief Justice of the Superior Court of the State until the end of the same year.

When the Revolution of 1846 occurred under Salas, the State of Oajaca assumed an independent sovereignty and established a Junta vesting the executive power triumvirate, composed of Fernandez del Campo, Arteaga and Juarez. Acting in their capacity, they restored the constitution of 1824, and Arteaga was elected Governor, and Juarez was deputy to the general constituent congress of 1846, and in this body he took a leading part, and led the proposition to secure a loan of \$14,000,000.00 to defend the Republic against the armies of the United States.

Arteaga, having resigned in 1847, Juarez was elected in his place as Governor of Oajaca, and served uninterruptedly for five years, the longest period which up to that time any civil officer had served in Mexico. It was here that he showed his great capacity as a leader, ruler and reformer. He introduced many reforms, put the finances of the State on a sound basis, met all the demands of the General Government for contributions, paid all its debts, met every financial obligation, secured order and good government throughout the entire State, and when he retired from office he left money in the treasury.

When Santa Ana became President of the Republic, recognizing in this young successful leader one who would naturally be his antagonist in all his designs and intentions, he promptly

arrested Juarez and banished him from Mexico. He went to New Orleans, where he lived for two years in very straightened circumstances. While he was living in New Orleans, he supported himself by working in a cigar factory, making cigars. Here we have a remarkable instance of a man who had filled some of the most exalted offices in his native country, a scholar, and a statesman, working as a common laborer, twisting tobacco, having for his associates negro slaves. I doubt whether in the history of the world we have a parallel case. Garibaldi, when an exile in this country about the same time, worked in a candle factory; but his associates were free men like himself. But Juarez worked with men who were working under the lash of their masters. He was as dark as those with whom he worked, and it is doubtful whether he received treatment any better, except to escape the lash, and yet this little silent man, toiling away at the bench with slaves, was destined in the brief space of ten years to drive one emperor from his throne, an emperor that belonged to one of the oldest, proudest and most powerful royal houses in Europe; and by his sanction that emperor was to die like a common criminal; and at the same time he was to indirectly strike a fatal blow at one of the mightiest sovereigns of his day, who bore the prestige and the name of his uncle, the greatest man the world has ever seen since Julius Caesar; and the effect of that blow was to finally send him into captivity and exile. But while he was working at the toilers' bench he was improving every spare hour in studying the institutions of the Great North American Republic, the United States; and he became so thoroughly versed in them, her laws, her schools, her financial system, that he determined, if possible, upon his return to his native country, should be ever be permitted to return, to imbue his countrymen with them, and, if possible, to establish these principles. One thing particularly he was impressed with here, and that was our free, independent religious institutions. He had been born and reared in a country that, while nominally a Republic, still was cursed with privileged classes. First, the army and all connected with it was entirely independent of every other department of Government. The civil Government had no voice in its control; it was absolutely independent. The next was the church. While practically everybody in the Republic of Mexico belonged to the Catholic church, yet the Catholic church, its priests, its bishops and its monks and all of their establishments were as independent of the Civil Government as though the Civil Government did not exist. Most of the clergy of that church were Spanish, having no sympathy with the people whatever; and in the struggle against Spain, when Mexico

threw off the yoke of that power the hierarchy of the church had stood loyally by the Spanish Government and sought by their powerful influence to perpetuate the Spanish rule; and after Mexico became a Republic they had done everything they could to embarrass, to bring confusion and to create dissensions, hoping thereby that the Mexican people, at last wearied by anarchy and disorder would again welcome the Spanish Sovereignty. Their possessions in Mexico were immense. In addition to their churches and convents and monasteries, which were more numerous than in any country in the world with the possible exception of Spain, she owned and possessed more than two-thirds of the country; and not a dollar of this was subject to taxation, but instead the other part was taxed heavily to support the church of the state.

Abraham Lincoln upon one occasion was in Natchez, Mississippi and witnessed a negro auction where negroes were sold. It was reported that the sight so filled him with indignation that he said if he ever got a chance to hit slavery he would hit it hard; and so it was with this great Mexican statesman. He had seen in the forty years of the independence of Mexico forty rebellions, and he knew who had engineered those rebellions and forced them to the front, and he determined that if he ever got a chance to hit at the cause of these rebellions, he would hit it hard. The opportunity came and he kept his word and struck it to its death.

In July, 1855, he learned that a revolution had broken out in Mexico, and he resolved that he would return to his native land, which he did, landing at Acapulco. Then he began that wonderful career of twelve years and a little over, a career that has never been equaled on this continent and has been excelled but a few times in the history of the world. Upon landing in Mexico he joined General Alvarez, then commanding the revolutionary troops against General Santa Ana. Alvarez was proclaimed President on October 4, 1855, and he at once appointed Juarez Minister of Justice and Religion. It is well known now that he had already acquainted the leading men of the reform movement with his intention. He assembled them together in conference at the headquarters of General Alvarez, and there laid before them his project. He pointed out to them the ills of Mexico and her sufferings and distraction of forty years, convinced them that the only safety for the Republic lay in completely revolutionizing the affairs of church and state and that

the church must be placed completely at the mercy of the state. In other words, things were to be reversed, and instead of the church being the master of the state, the state was to master the church, which should be a servant of the state. Juarez was pledged the unanimous support of all the elements opposed to General Santa Ana. It was a great undertaking. The people of Mexico were thoroughly Catholic and thoroughly religious and devout. The power of the priests was beyond the conception of any person not living in Mexico at that time.

To lead the people or to prevail upon the people to back them in their conquest of the church, it took men of great faith, great courage and great ability, and God has raised up the men in the persons of Juarez and Comonfort and Diaz and Escobedo. As already stated, Juarez was appointed Minister of Justice and Religion, and immediately after the inauguration of the new administration, Juarez proposed a bill for the abolishment of the special clerical and military courts, under which these two classes had long enjoyed immunity from the laws of the nation, and the measure received the unanimous sanction of the constituent congress. When this had been accomplished the die was cast and the issue was made and there could be no retreat.

The alarm was at once sounded by the church leaders and now began that terrific struggle of ten years—ten years of terrible battles. Often defeated, often disheartened, but never discouraged this little Indian kept right on and on to final victory. When Comonfort succeeded Alvarez to the Presidency, December 11, 1855, he at once appointed Juarez Governor of Oajaca, in order to remove him from the Cabinet. Juarez was received with joy in his native state, and his second administration was even more successful than his first had been. Such was his immense popularity that in September, 1857, he was elected the Constitutional Governor of the State, and at the same time at the general election, he was elected President of the Supreme Court of Justice and this made him in effect the Vice-President of the Republic.

While Comonfort was an able man, an honest man and a true patriot and at heart in full sympathy with Juarez, yet the tremendous task that he saw before him was so appalling that he wavered and vascillated; in other words he was unequal to the great task to be accomplished. There was only one man

that could lead the people out of the wilderness to victory, and that man was Benito Pablo Juarez.

Finally Comonfort retired, seeing how utterly out of tune he was, his conservatism creating distrust in the ranks of the liberals, while it gained no friends for him in the clerical party, in fact, the contest had gotten beyond where a middle course could be adopted. The liberal or progressive forces were rallying around the constitution of 1857; while the clericals, on the other hand, under the leadership of Miramon, were aiming for the overthrow of the constitution of 1857, and were defending the prerogatives of the church. The battle was joined and it had to be an uncompromising battle, a battle to the death. The clerical party seemingly had every advantage. First, they had the entire force and power of the hierarchy. Every one who opposed the church party was practically excommunicated by the church. The priests and bishops sought to make it a holy warfare; and their enemies, or the forces of Juarez, defender of the constitution, were denounced as apostates, infidels and robbers of the church, whose punishment would be the fires of eternal perdition. And when we consider the intense religious character of the Mexican people we can get some sort of an idea what the effect was upon them by this denunciation. Then the pure Spanish element which very largely constituted the wealth and the aristocracy of the Republic was largely and almost universally against the forces of Juarez. Then the army was generally on the side of the Clericals, for the constitution of '57 had subordinated the army to the Government. But on the side of Juarez all the genuine real patriots of the country rallied. The terrible experiences that Mexico had gone through for forty years had taught them that nothing but strong radical measures would save the Republic, and so Benito Pablo Juarez came to the office of President of Mexico upon the retirement of Comonfort by virtue of his office as Vice-President, and was recognized as President by the States in January, 1858. This was the logical outcome of the situation.

Juarez was the soul embodiment of the whole struggle for the regeneration of Mexico. In the next two years more than fifty battles were fought between these contending forces, as bloody, cruel battles as that country had ever witnessed. The first year victory seemed to be with the Clerical party; but in the end the forces of the constitutionalists were triumphant. In April, 1859, Juarez was recognized as President by the United

States, and on January 11, 1861, he entered the City of Mexico which had been in the possession of the Clerical party up to that time. As a demonstration of the great courage and faith of Juarez in the darkest days of his cause, he issued a decree nationalizing and sequestrating the property of the church. He followed this up shortly after by a law regarding civil marriages, and still later by the decree of religious toleration and the secularization of the cemeteries. That the reader may understand the meaning of these reforms, I will state that by this decree all of the church property, that is, the buildings, convents, monasteries was confiscated by the State, and that is the status to this day. In a conversation which the writer had with President Juarez, just after the close of the struggle that had ended in the execution of Maximilian, I expressed surprise that they had gone so far in confiscating the property of the church, remarking that it was only right that property which the church possessed, which was not used for the purpose of worship, should justly have been confiscated; but that the church buildings should have been left in the hands of the church. I remember that great statesmen in his reply said that he could understand how one who was not familiar with the struggle in Mexico in an earlier day and knew but little of the attitude of the church toward the Republic might think as I did. But he said they well known the problem with which they had to deal, that from the earliest days in their struggle against Spain, to the last one in their struggle against Maximilian, the church had been the Republic's most inveterate foe. Hence they must make a clean matter of the whole thing by placing the church completely at the mercy of the Republic, so that any moment they desired they could close the doors of every church in the Republic. He said that he was reared a Catholic, that the people of Mexico were practically all members of that church; they knew scarcely anything about any other religion, that they were anxious and willing to be in accord with the church; but the church must not exercise its great power for the destruction of the Republic. Religious liberty up to this time had been unknown in Mexico; but by this act religious liberty was fully established and the Republic thrown open to the religions of the world.

Up to this time there had been no such thing as civil marriages; now civil marriage was made essential, and after that if one wished another marriage by the priest, this was permitted.

Up to this time all the cemeteries of the Republic were under the direction of the church. No one could be buried in

them, unless they died within the bosom of the church. But now the cemeteries were thrown open to every one, regardless of religious creed.

In March, 1861, Juarez was elected President of the Republic by an overwhelming majority. The opposing candidate was Miguel Lerdo de Tejada. One of the first acts of his administration was the suspension of all payment of debts to foreign nations or to foreign creditors for two years. This was not intended by any means as an act of repudiation; but just the reverse. Mexico had been in a constant tumult for forty years, and for four or five years the Republic had passed through a terrible ordeal, one of the bloodiest civil wars that any country had experienced. All industries, all trade, all commerce had been brought to a standstill. The Mexico had emerged at last from the terrible struggle, and comparative peace was within her borders. Juarez believed that in two years' time he could get the departments of justice, of trade and commerce into a condition where he could establish a system of finance that would enable them to meet every obligation at home and abroad. Hence this order. This is a well known principle of business throughout the commercial world, that whenever, for any reason, a business concern becomes temporarily embarrassed, that the concern shall have proper time to arrange to meet their obligations. But the conservative or Clerical party, having been beaten in the field, now resorted to diplomacy, what they had failed to accomplish at home by political means and power of arms in the field. So emissaries were dispatched to Europe to make an appeal to Catholic powers working through the influence of the Pope to intervene in behalf of the Holy Church and its interest in Mexico. But the Catholic powers of Europe just at that time were not well prepared to interfere. Austria had just received a stunning defeat by France a year or two before; and France was not disposed to espouse such a cause, so that the only way to accomplish anything was by indirection. Spain was willing to embark in war against Mexico in hope of reinstating itself in power in that Republic. Napoleon the Third, who had very little, if any, religious sentiment was to be approached through his wife, the Empress Eugenia. Concealing the real object in view, Louis Napoleon was made to believe that now was the great opportunity of his reign to establish in Mexico a Latin Empire as a breakwater against the Republic of the United States. England very shrewdly was appealed to, through her financial interests. It was pointed out to her that this action of Juarez in suspending payment to their foreign creditors for two

years was but a prelude to her complete repudiation of her debts. So these three powers entered into a convention or treaty, October 31, 1861, to send an army and navy to compel Mexico to pay, or provide to pay these debts.

But Juarez was willing to protect the interest of the creditors and assured them that Mexico, now for the first time in its history, was in a situation to arrange to meet her obligation. So England drew out. In fact, England had never entered into it in a hearty manner; and just as soon as she was assured that Mexico now had a permanent government, that the man at the head of the government was a strong, able man, they were only too willing to withdraw, and no act of the British Government was more popular and gave such universal satisfaction as this. Spain, as has been already stated, entered into the movement, not so much to secure the payment of the small sums due her subjects, as it was to get a foothold again, and to reestablish herself in the country. But when she became fully aware of the designs of the Emperor of France, she proceeded at once to enter into an understanding with Mexico, and drew out of the alliance.

The withdrawal of England and Spain from the alliance, left France in a very humiliating position. Her great design of establishing an Empire seemed about to collapse. However, the Emperor Napoleon determined to go ahead. So he declared war against Juarez on April 16, 1862. Juarez, after fighting four years to subdue the factions in his own country, now found himself at war with one of the most powerful nations of Europe. But with his characteristic faith and courage, the great statesman and leader never faltered for a moment. The French government informed the United States government that they did not intend in any way to violate the Monroe Doctrine, that they had no thought of territorial aggrandizement, but simply to compel Mexico to meet her financial obligation. The United States could not object to this, and was not in a condition to object to it, even if she would; for all of this occurred right in the midst of the great Civil War.

The genius of Juarez never shone brighter than at this time. Almost any other man would have abandoned the contest. But not so with Juarez. He was equal to the occasion. He issued a proclamation to the people of Mexico telling them that a foreign foe with an army had landed upon their shores and was marching on their capitol. He appealed to the Mexi-

cans, irrespective of past political differences, to rally to his standard and to fight a common enemy. He recognized the army and imbued them with his noble spirit, to meet and grapple with the adversary of their homes. On the 25th of January, 1862, Juarez issued his celebrated decree declaring that all men between the age of sixteen and sixty who failed to enroll themselves among the defenders of the country should be declared traitors to their country. The condition of the times demanded this decree, stern as it seems to be. The country was in a perilous condition; traitors were on every hand, as well as a foreign foe, and it required the strongest of measures to meet the emergency. The first of April the French Army began their march toward the City of Mexico, never dreaming any serious opposition. They marched triumphantly on to Puebla, and here they met the leadership of the gallant young Zaragoza, one of the brightest and ablest generals that Mexico ever produced. He promptly attacked the French, though they outnumbered his men two to one, and dealt them a crushing and overwhelming defeat. The arms of the Republic won a glorious victory, and to this day that date is celebrated as the most glorious in the history of Mexico. It reminds one something of the battle of New Orleans, fought by Gen. Jackson in 1815, where with just a handful of undisciplined Tennessee and Kentucky mountaineers, he met the veteran army of Gen. Packingham, which outnumbered him three to one, and practically annihilated them. The French army now retreated and it was some weeks before they were able to resume their march. About this time the gallant young Zaragoza sickened and died. This was an irreparable loss to the Republic. General Forey had now arrived from France and took command of the French army. The career of this officer was in every way the darkest in the French occupation of Mexico. He plundered and murdered and confiscated property. In his whole career there was not one redeeming feature. As long as Mexico exists the name of Forey will be remembered with horror.

In May, 1863, the French army took up the line of march to the capitol. They had been more than a year on the way and had not won but a single victory. Now they captured Puebla and marched on to the City of Mexico without much opposition and occupied the city the 11th of June, 1863. It had been fourteen months since they first marched out of Vera Cruz.

On the occupation of the City of Mexico by the French army, Juarez established his government at San Luis Potosi,

June 10, and shortly afterward he retreated still further to Monterey. After a few weeks, he retreated to Chihuahua and established his government in that city October 12, 1864. Meanwhile the French, or rather the French Emperor, Louis Napoleon was informed by an assemblage of notables that was composed entirely of the Clerical Party, or nearly so, that it was their wish that he would select for them some Catholic Prince to rule over them, and suggested Archduke Maximilian of the House of Hapsburg, the brother of Francis Joseph, the Emperor of Austria. Of course, this choice had already been made known by Emperor Napoleon long before the congress of notables assembled. But, nevertheless, the Emperor of the French complimented the notables on their selection of the Prince, so illustrious and so acceptable to him as the Archduke Maximilian, of Austria.

Maximilian was now informed of the choice made, and after a little pretended hesitation, he consented on condition that he should be chosen by the French people. So an election was called by the French authorities, a day appointed, French troops posted at the polls to see that no one who was not acceptable to them or was not in sympathy with their views should take part in the election. And, of course, the vote was unanimous and the Archduke was at once informed of the result and he and his consort Carlotta proceeded to Mexico, and were crowned in the cathedral of the City of Mexico, with great pomp and ceremony, Emperor and Empress of Mexico.

Louis Napoleon could not possibly have selected a more unfit man than Maximilian. The man needed for the work that he intended should be done in Mexico, should have been a man of decided abilities, of great experience, and a diplomat. Maximilian possessed none of these qualities. He would have done well enough to have reigned over a well organized harmonious government where a mere figurehead was needed. It seems strange to the world even to this day that such a man was chosen. It can only be explained on the ground that no other Prince in Europe cared for the job.

Maximilian was a man of some excellent qualities. His domestic life was beautiful. He was the only one of the male line of the House of Hapsburg for many generations that had any morals at all. Being a gentleman, he naturally hated a traitor and did not have diplomacy enough to conceal his aversion. He openly expressed his admiration of Juarez, and his contempt for

those that had taken part with the French in their invasion of their own country. Shortly after he became Emperor, the leaders of the Catholic church requested him to restore all the church property to them. He replied that he could give them the church buildings to worship in and that the church should be supported by the Empire, but that their other property had already passed into the hands of a third party and it would be impossible to restore it. He was requested furthermore, by the Clericals to prohibit the exercise of any other religion except that of the Catholic religion. He replied that while he was a devout son of the church, he did not think it was wise or proper to prohibit absolutely all other religions except that of the religion of the state; he thought other religions should be permitted to come in under certain restrictions. It seems that Maximilian had further promised them that when he became thoroughly settled in government that he would recommend compensation to the church for the property which they had been deprived of by Juarez. But this did not satisfy them at all; so many of them withdrew from court, and the representative of the Pope returned to Rome. Juarez, after abandoning the capitol, knowing how futile it would be with his army of undisciplined men to attempt to cope with the French army, decided instead of meeting them in general battle to organize a general guerrilla warfare and continually harass the troops of the Empire, to keep them constantly in a state of disquietude. The writer of this article heard Juarez say at the close of the struggle that he never doubted for a single moment the final outcome; that all he had to do was to keep the forces of the Republic well in hand until the hour of deliverance would come.

On the third of October, 1865, Emperor Maximilian issued a decree that sealed the fate of his Empire and of his own life. In this proclamation, he declared that Juarez had finally given up the contest, that he had so valiantly fought for and left the territory of Mexico; that therefore, hereafter the struggle in Mexico would not be between two governments struggling for supremacy, but it would be between the forces of the Empire on one side, and marauders and guerrillas on the other, and that they would be treated as such, that no quarter would be given, that when captured, they would be tried by a drumhead court martial and immediately executed, and that anyone aiding and abetting them would share the same fate, or any person concealing any of them would be held equally as guilty, or the authorities of any town, city or village that knew of the existence of any such bands and did not inform the authorities, would receive the

severest possible punishment. This order was no doubt one of the most cruel and blood thirsty decrees that had been issued by a Prince in a thousand years. It was predicated to begin with upon a falsehood, for Juarez was not out of the country, and had never been out of the country since the day that he returned from exile after his sojourn in New Orleans, and it is very doubtful that Maximilian believed this to be the case when he issued the decree. But we shall speak of this farther on.

When the American Civil war closed, the United States government promptly informed the Emperor of France that the presence of foreign troops in Mexico, supporting and maintaining Maximilian as Emperor, was in conflict with the policy of our government and that therefore, they requested the French Emperor to withdraw his troops from Mexico forthwith. Napoleon was compelled to comply with the request, consequently, measures were taken for the evacuation of Mexico by the French troops. In the fall of 1865 the term of Juarez expired as President. But it was not possible to hold an election, and, therefore, Gen. Gonzalez Ortega, by virtue of his position as President of the Supreme Court of Justice, asserted his right to assume the executive power. But Juarez perceived that this would be very disastrous to their cause to have a change of executives at this time. He, therefore, extended his term until such time when the country would be at peace and a regular constitutional election could be held. For a few months the seat of government was at El Paso, or what is now known as the town of Juarez, opposite the present town of El Paso, Texas. While there, he was often invited to partake of the hospitality of the American commander at Fort Bliss; but this he refused to do, as it would be leaving the soil of Mexico. Now, as the French troops began to leave Mexico, the Republican forces began to concentrate and began to win victories all along the line. Juarez, at this juncture, now began to move south, tarrying for a time at Chihuahua and then at Durango, then to Zacatecas and then to San Luis Potosi, while the troops under Maximilian were concentrated at the City of Queretaro. Gen. Escobedo and Gen. Diaz met the forces of the Empire at this city with 30,000 men, and there the end came. Maximilian surrendered with his entire force to the Republic. Shortly after this, all the places held by the Imperialists surrendered to the Republican forces, and on July 16, 1867, Juarez reentered the City of Mexico, after an absence of four years. Four years before when he retired before the Imperial force and the army of the Clericals, almost the whole world believed that his case was hopeless. Editorials ap-

peared in all the leading papers of Europe and in this country, in which Juarez was generally complimented for the splendid fight that he had put up against the tremendous opposition, but all spoke of his cause as hopelessly defeated and lost forever; but there was one man that did not believe that, and that was Juarez himself, and his brave lieutenants whom he had inspired with his own unconquerable spirit. And now after a lapse of four years, he victoriously and triumphantly entered the ancient capitol of the Republic.

Maximilian was at once brought to trial, charged with several specifications; but two only were pressed. First, that of fillibuster, that as a subject of Francis Joseph of Austria, with whom the Republic of Mexico was at peace, he had entered Mexico and directed a warfare against the peace and integrity of the Republic. Second, on October 3, 1865, he had caused a decree to be issued in his name, ordering that all found fighting for the Republic should be made to suffer death.

They permitted him to have counsel. But what could they do? There were the facts that could not be denied, and the result was he was found guilty and executed.

There has been all over the world a feeling that Juarez was unjustifiable in permitting the execution of Maximilian. This arises from the fact that the world is not generally conversant with the situation that made his execution imperative. It cannot be pleaded in his behalf that he was invited to Mexico by any body of men that had a right to speak for Mexico. The notables, so called, were an unauthorized body that represented nobody and were self chosen. The election that was ordered by Louis Napoleon was as big a farce as was the election ordered by Louis Napoleon in France when he was chosen President for life. In both cases troops at the polls prevented any other result except that which would be pleasing to Napoleon. Maximilian was fully conversant with all of this, and knew from the first that without the presence of a French army his throne could not be maintained a month. Consequently, his presence in Mexico was that of a fillibuster, and hence the first charge was true in every particular.

Now as to the second charge of issuing the decree of October 3, 1865. He had been defended for this, or rather apologized for on various grounds. First, that he believed when he issued it that Juarez had left the territory of Mexico. But it was too

important a matter for a Sovereign to take for granted without proper investigation. Declaring brave men to be outlaws and to be shot to death, and whole communities to be put in the same category without having first ascertained the facts of the statement put forth in a decree that Juarez had left Mexico, was criminal and indefensible from any standpoint of view. And then from the fact that he let the decree stand and continued to enforce it thereafter, when he had every evidence of the presence of Juarez in Mexico, shows how faulty is this defense. By others it has been asserted that it was only intended to intimidate, and thus to compel obedience. But there remains the fact that it was a living force, that by its enforcement, hundreds and, indeed thousands of as brave, splendid men as ever defended their country were slaughtered, and mercilessly slaughtered. Again, he has been apologized for, that as the decree was so inconsistent with his life and character, that he could not have been the author of it. Some have attributed the authorship to Louis Napoleon; others to Bazaine, the French General. But who the author was, or who suggested the cruel order, it makes but little difference. There remains the fact; it was issued in his name and for two years it did its cruel and damnable work in the name of Maximilian. And then again, while it may seem inconsistent with his character, the decree was consistent with the record of the House of Hapsburg, of Austria, to which he belonged. One has only to remember what the brave patriots of Hungaria passed through after the triumph of the armies of Austria and Russia over them in 1850. I think there can be little doubt in our mind who was the real author of that bloody decree. In executing Maximilian, or permitting his execution, Juarez was justified from any standpoint from which it can be viewed. He did not do it as an act of revenge. That great soul was incapable of the spirit of revenge. He did it as an act of Supreme Justice, and also as a wise and statesmanship act to safeguard the future.

The fate of Maximilian will ever be remembered by any Prince of Europe, who might ever dare to repeat what Maximilian attempted to do in Mexico.

After the reestablishment of the authority of the Republic throughout all of Mexico, Juarez began the work of adjusting the conditions of Mexico to the new regime. In November, 1867, he was reelected President of the Republic and reelected again in 1871. During this time he was busy at work extending the principle of the constitution throughout the Republic. Some disturbances took place and now and then the embers of the old

conflict were fanned into flame, the last dying struggle of a defeated hierarchy; but still this great man kept right on to the last. His death came suddenly and unexpectedly, due to apoplexy, July 16, 1872, at the age of sixty-six. Thus ended the career of the greatest man that Spanish-America ever produced and certainly one of the greatest characters of the age in which he lived.

When the writer saw him the last time, seven years before his death, he had the same jet black hair and black penetrating eyes. He was about five feet four inches in height, a very silent man and exceedingly modest; no one ever heard him boast of any of his achievements. He was unlike most of the Mexicans in this respect. The Mexicans are known for their dashing appearance and gay equipage. But Juarez, every time that I met him, and perhaps it was fifty times, was always dressed the same, in plain broadcloth, with nothing about him to attract attention. He rarely, if ever, attended any place of amusement, and never attended a bull fight. He was practically a total abstainer, now and then drinking a glass of wine, although he preferred a cup of coffee or a glass of water. All of his kindred died when he was but a child, and he, as I understand, never married, thereby leaving no descendants, no one to inherit his great name. While he was very silent and unobtrusive, yet there was something about him, a mysterious something not indicated by anything that he would either say or do, that would impress you that you were in the presence of a great man, a leader that you would be willing to follow and take his counsel without question. Someone asked a man once who was intimately acquainted with Gen. Andrew Jackson, what it was that made him such a great leader of men. Not his education, for the hero of New Orleans was very limited in his education; though it was true he was a brave man and knew not danger. Well the man said that he did not know, that no one could tell; but he said if a party of men were penetrating a forest, and all strangers to each other, and if Gen. Jackson was among them, and they should be attacked by Indians, that before they knew it, they would all be following the leadership of Jackson, not knowing why they were following him; neither would Jackson know why he was leading them. It cannot be explained. Juarez had for lieutenants, both in the field and in his cabinet, gifted men, yet they all yielded to Juarez without question. Juarez was possessed of a liberal education, speaking fluently three languages, the Spanish, his native Indian tongue and the French. He was a good writer, but had not the gift of eloquence. He

possessed no vices whatever. He was as humane as Lincoln. After the surrender of the Imperial Army and the leaders of the Clerical party, he only executed about twenty, and these were men that had been so cruel, so blood-thirsty, that they had outraged every principle of humanity, and their execution was demanded by every principle of justice. There was a great clamor for the execution of hundreds of others; but this he refused to do, declaring that such a thing would be nothing short of vindictive revenge, which he would not tolerate.

It has been charged by the Clerical party and others that he was an atheist, a disbeliever in God and religion; but this was a gross misrepresentation of this great man. I quote from his proclamation, issued by him to the Mexican people at the close of the war with Maximilian. He said, "Let the Mexican people fall on their knees before God, who has deigned to crown our arms with victory. He has smitten the foreigner, who has oppressed us sorely. He has established these His people in their rightful place, for He who hath His habitation in the heavens is the Visitor and Protector of our country, who strikes down those who came to do us ill, the Excellent, the only just Almighty and Eternal One is He who hath dispersed the nation which like a vulture had fallen on Mexico."

It is hard to place Juarez in history, for this reason, he had a work to do that no other one in the world's history has had to do. Washington led the forces of the Colonies against a common foe. He had but a few factions to reconcile; they were acquainted more or less with the principle of self government. Lincoln was the leader of a great nation in a struggle against disintegration and disunion, and incidentally the Emancipator of a race. But Juarez indeed had to make brick without straw. He found a country wrecked with civil wars and factional fights, constantly engaged in turmoil and battle; a church that had embraced the entire population whose hierarchy was thoroughly disloyal to every principle of the Republic and made no attempt to conceal it, but openly avowing their sympathies with the mother country, Spain. That church controlled and owned more than two-thirds of the real estate of the country. The army dominated everything. Civil administration was subordinate to it. Juarez determined that all this should be changed. He inaugurated a struggle to liberate the Republic both from the rule of the church and the army. It was no warfare against the religion of the country, but against the church as a political power. The army must be made subordinate to the civil admin-

istration; a system of public schools should be established that should give every child in the Republic a chance for liberal education, and the teachers of these schools should be secular teachers, teachers that would educate the Mexican children in love and devotion to their country and to the Republican institutions, marriage should be a civil contract; and religious liberty, the right to worship God as everyone saw fit and proper, would be the law of the land. As monasteries and convents were schools where disloyalty was taught, they should be abolished. Anyone knowing the Mexican people can appreciate somewhat the extent of his task. For ten years all the powers of the church, all the powers of the army, and finally reinforced as they were by one of the most powerful nations of Europe, were against him. Such opposition was so stupendous that we can hardly conceive of it, yet in ten years—one single decade—his victory was complete in every particular, and before his death, he saw these principles so thoroughly entrenched, that in the forty years that have elapsed since then, no attempt has been made to undo what he did, and Mexico firmly established on these broad and humane principles of enlightenment we trust to a glorious future.

When future historians shall search out the history of the nineteenth century to find and write down the names of those splendid men that adorned and glorified that century, Jefferson, Lincoln, Garibaldi, Gladstone, Cavour, among this galaxy of glorious names, one that shall shine as bright and as resplendent as any, will stand the name of Benito Pablo Juarez, the saviour and regenerator of Mexico.

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